

# An examination of the persuasive marketing strategies used by charity websites to attract donors

How prevalent are charity websites on applying persuasive marketing strategies towards an increase in donor intentions?

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## Introduction

- Donation is a form of pro-social behaviour performed for a healthier functioning of a society (Chang, 2014).
- Commercial marketing such as websites have become an increasingly popular method of donation appeal by charity organisations.
- Message variables, Message framing, Guilt, Altruistic and Egoistic Motives are seen most common in charity websites.
- Azjen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour proposes that people’s behaviours are determined by their intentions through the process of 3 component: Attitude towards behaviour, Subjective Norms & Perceived Behavioural Control.

## Aim of Study

- Examine possible persuasive marketing strategies used by charity websites to attract donors’ attention
- Through Thematic Analysis, interpret website data to observe most common methods used to increase donation intentions.

## Methods

- Qualitative research method was used as it provides in depth interpretations.
- Use of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) provided flexibility and opportunity to focus on analysing the data in richer detail through the use of relevant themes and subthemes.
- 12 charity websites were used in order to observe possible persuasive marketing strategies initiating attitude change in donor intentions.
- Ethical approval was granted by the Psychology Research Ethics Committee of UWL.

## Analysis



## Discussion

- Guilt appeals were seen to be the most prevalent and favourable form of persuasive advertising tool used amongst majority of the websites.
- Emerged themes mirrored previous research indicating that charity websites use various forms of message variables and guilt stimuli to increase donation intention.

## Limitations

- Interpretations may be subject to researcher bias.
- This study does not allow for comparison of marketing strategies across different causes.

## Implications

- Findings in this research provide supportive attributes for smaller charities intending to gain donations & anticipating to establish a profitable charity organisation.
- The findings in this study proposed that any form of marketing and advertising requires persuasive message channels; encourage & enabling funding from potential consumers increasing higher profit margins.

## Future Recommendations

- Use of content analysis – allows direct observation of specific images and word concepts within various media e.g. Books, TV, Billboards and Ad’s.
- Focus on a larger scale of data in order to analyse more profound methods of attracting donor intention.

## References

Azjen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 50, 179-211.  
Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 77-101.  
Chang, C. (2014). Guilt regulation: *The relative effects of altruistic versus egoistic appeals for charity advertising*, 43(3), 211-227.